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## MISCELLANEA.

## THE EGYPTIAN PURIM.

THE Megillah, which even at the present day is read in Cairo on the 28th of Adar in commemoration of the wonderful escape of the Jews under Ahmed Shaitân, was published thirty years ago by Dr. Löwe, the travelling companion of Sir Moses Montefiore. In Nos. 7-9 of the Hebrew magazine *Hamagid*, from February 14-28, 1866, the text of this Megillah, as read in Cairo, is printed, together with the most important explanations indicated by the Arabic translation, which Dr. Löwe had also made use of. It seems that Professor Graetz did not use this publication, for, although he refers in the third edition of the ninth volume, p. 22, n. 1, to *Hamagid*, 10—he quotes erroneously pp. 7-9—he only knows that “formerly” a Megillah existed, an observation which induced Mr. Margoliouth to talk of “the long-lost Megillah of the Egyptian Purim” (*J. Q. R.*, VIII, p. 274). In the same volume of *Hamagid*, No. 16, Supplement, mention is made of this Purim by Gurland, who publishes, from a St. Petersburg manuscript, Samuel ben Nachman’s note on these events, which was edited in the same year by Dr. Neubauer (*Aus der Petersburger Bibliothek*, p. 118, N. XXI a).

The text which lay before Mr. Margoliouth is the same which was made known to us by Dr. Löwe, except that it is more correct and complete, owing to the fact that the numerous gaps, occasioned by similar endings, are filled up. For the sake of attaining still greater accuracy I give here a few corrections, offered by a comparison of both texts.

Page 277, line 10, instead of המם probably החמם.

- |   |      |   |  |
|---|------|---|--|
| “ | “    | “ | 1 from bottom, read אֵלֶּף אִישׁ.              |
| “ | 278, | “ | 4, read וַיִּפְלְאוּ instead of וַיִּפְלִיאוּ. |
| “ | “    | “ | 18, read וַיִּקְרְאוּ צוֹם וּבְכִי וְזַעֲקָה.  |
| “ | “    | “ | 20, read שְׁוֹעֵתָם instead of בְּכִיתָם.      |
| “ | “    | “ | 4 from bottom, read אִישׁ יְהוּדִי.            |
| “ | 279, | “ | 2, read יִנְתֵּן.                              |
| “ | “    | “ | 6, read שָׁלָל.                                |

Page 279, line 9, במהרה אמיחכם. It is noteworthy that *Sambari*, p. 145, also must have had the reading במהירות in the text of the Megillah.

- " " " 18, read מקצת היהודים.  
 " " " 24, read בשבעה עשר.  
 " 280, " 2, the words וישבעו איש לאחיו, ויקחו are missing.  
 " " " 5, reads correctly וירדפו אחריו חיל המלך שלמה ולא מצאזה ויהי כראות.  
 " " " 13-14, always בשדה הקנים.  
 " " " 19, read וכל חילו.  
 " " " 21, read ויחר[י]בו.  
 " " " 22, read וביום שבעה ועשרים.  
 " " " 25, read אותו, תלוי.  
 " 281, " 2, read והשיב עמלם.  
 " " " 4, read ועשרים בו.  
 " " " 5, read מיד שונאיהם ומבקשי רעתם.  
 " " " 10, read כל איביך ה' ושונאי סגולתך.

The conclusion reads more completely: הושיענו ה' אלקינו וקבצנו מהרה מן הגוים להודות לשם קדשך להשתבח בתהלתך ואנחנו עמך וצאן מרעיתך נודה לך לעולם לדור ודור נספר תהלתך.

The 28th of Adar is, according to the plain statement in the Megillah and the tradition of the Egyptian Jews, the Purim of Cairo<sup>1</sup>. Samuel b. Nachman's statement that Ahmed Shaitân was beheaded on the 15th of Adar is an error. Although he was an eye-witness of the events, and a victim of the plundering—ולקחו גם כן כל אשר יש—yet the date of the 28th of Adar is too well attested to underlie any doubt. It seems that the 14th of Adar was the day on which the danger was worst, and this lost Purim day should be replaced by an everlasting new one. The latter was to be fixed a fortnight after the 14th, and should be always celebrated on the same day of the week as the old one. Thus I understand *Sambari's* words: ולפי שביום שיפול פורים בי"ד לחדש יפול ג"כ. אותו היום שהוא כ"ח לחדש ירדף אויב. The colophon אויב, given by *Sambari*, corresponds with the year 1524. His other indication, however, ועוד עשו סימן אחר יאר פניו אתנו שנת אלף ותנו לשטרות, is evidently false. For not 1456, but 1835, corresponds according to the *aera contractuum* with the year 1524. But it is clear that we must read here לחרבן הבית for למנן שטרות, for  $1524 - 68 = 1456$ . *Sambari's* Chronicle well deserves a new edition, in which Dr. Neubauer's omissions might be supplemented and a distinct line drawn between that which is borrowed and *Sambari's* own information.

D. KAUFMANN.

<sup>1</sup> See Zunz, *die Ritus*, p. 130.